

Members

Sen. Kent Adams, Chairperson
Sen. Marvin Riegsecker
Sen. Allie Craycraft
Sen. Connie Sipes
Rep. Denny Oxley
Rep. Vanessa Summers
Rep. Robert Alderman
Rep. Cleo Duncan
Hugh Beebe
Michael Carmin
Nan Daley
Herb Grulke
Susan Hansen



INDIANA COMMISSION ON AUTISM

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 29, 2001
Meeting Time: 11:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Sen. Kent Adams, Chairperson; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Rep. Vanessa Summers; Rep. Cleo Duncan; Hugh Beebe; Herb Grulke; Susan Hansen.

Members Absent: Sen. Marvin Riegsecker; Sen. Connie Sipes; Rep. Denny Oxley; Rep. Robert Alderman; Michael Carmin; Nan Daley.

Sen. Adams called the meeting to order at 11:10 A.M. He informed those present that an annual information report would be completed to summarize the Commission's 2001 interim activities.

In response to a request from the members at the October 10, 2001, meeting, Susan Preble, Legislative Liaison, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), provided copies of the Medicaid autism waiver amendment document² that was sent to the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA). The document resulted from the HEA 1647-2001 requirement that FSSA amend the autism waiver to cover applied behavioral analysis treatment (ABA). Ms. Preble assisted the members in finding the language reflecting the age limit of 2 to 7 years for coverage of ABA under the waiver.

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

²See Exhibit 1.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Ms. Preble introduced Allison Becker, Division of Disability, Aging, and Rehabilitative Services (DDARS), to discuss the issue of federal funding for vocational rehabilitation. Ms. Becker informed the members that Indiana has recently become very aggressive in its approach to draw federal funding for vocational rehabilitation. She briefly discussed the uses of the funding and the activities of FSSA in obtaining the funding for developmental disability and autism funding.

There was general discussion concerning the age and time limitations on ABA treatment in the autism waiver amendment. There was general agreement that the limitations may result in the eligibility of few individuals for ABA coverage under the waiver. Ms. Becker informed the members that: (a) the age and time limitations were based on available information concerning optimal effectiveness of ABA; (b) the age limitation can be changed through another submission to HCFA; (c) broadening the age and time limitations will have a fiscal impact; (d) the ABA amendment benefits only those on the autism waiver; and (e) she is willing to work with Mr. Grulke and anyone else on amending the age and time limitations, if appropriate, and will send a letter to the Commission to report on the results of the work.

In response to a question from Mr. Grulke, Ms. Becker agreed to discuss with him the ABA types of services that are available under the developmental disability (DD) waiver.

Training of Teachers Concerning Autism

Sen. Adams informed the members that no one had responded to the meeting notice to testify concerning this issue, but that Ms. Daley, who could not attend the meeting, had sent a letter³. He informed the members that the Commission does not have the authority to form subcommittees, but that an informal workgroup could be formed to work on the education issues, according to Legislative Council rules. Sen. Adams then noted the vocational rehabilitation and ABA references in Ms. Daley's letter, referring to the previous testimony concerning those issues.

The members agreed to a recommendation in the annual report that the Commission: (a) encourages the Department of Education to appreciate the increasing number of children in the educational system who have autism; (b) believes that teachers are not currently sufficiently prepared to teach children with autism; and (c) encourages the Department of Education and Professional Standards Board to require autism training for teachers and expand ongoing training requirements to include autism training.

Sen. Adams referred to a letter⁴ from Penny Githens, parent, Bloomington, Indiana, concerning teacher training and asked that the letter be part of the record of the meeting.

Parent Testimony

Andrea Keller, parent, Valparaiso, Indiana, provided a copy of her testimony⁵. Ms. Keller discussed ABA, informing the members that there are not different types of ABA, but that

³See Exhibit 2.

⁴See Exhibit 3.

⁵See Exhibit 4.

there are different applications of ABA. She distributed a copy of a flyer concerning a seminar that will take place next weekend in Indianapolis⁶. She stressed that adults and children who are older than 7 years of age benefit from ABA.

There was general discussion concerning the age limitations and knowledge regarding ABA. Sen. Adams and Rep. Summers discussed the legislative activity during the 2001 legislative session with respect to autism, and reiterated the need for interested parties to be involved in the legislative process for change to occur. Sen. Craycraft related the experience of the members of the Senate Health Committee receiving information concerning autism from constituents during the 2001 session and the progress that the constituents made in the passage of legislation.

In response to discussion concerning eligibility of individuals on the DD waiver for ABA services, Ms. Becker stated that "behavior management" services are covered under the DD waiver, and that some ABA services might fit within the meaning of "behavior management". She agreed to send related information to Ms. Keller.

In response to discussion concerning education of physicians who diagnose and treat children with autism, Rep. Summers suggested contacting the Indiana State Medical Association and obtaining a list of physicians to whom information could be provided concerning autism.

Ms. Keller informed the members about a new treatment approach combining medical treatment with ABA in treating autism. She proposed the use of posters in physician's offices to inform patients about autism. Sen. Adams encouraged the distribution of the posters to physician's offices and requested a letter sized copy of the information contained on the posters for the Commission.

Ms. Keller provided a binder containing information concerning ABA, California statistics on autism, nutritional treatments, internet sites, and copies of the posters⁷.

Luann Berk, parent, Indianapolis, Indiana, conveyed recent events in caring for her son who has Asperger's syndrome. She informed the members that he is currently hospitalized and that she is concerned about the next step in safely caring for him.

There was general discussion concerning: (a) state assisted care and the requirements for obtaining such care, including relinquishment of parental custody of the child to the state; (b) the function of the Indiana Resource Center for Autism in assisting parents in caring for their children with autism; (c) the importance of communication of parents of children with autism with insurers, physicians, and educators; and (d) the importance of continuing contact with legislators. Ms. Preble discussed a 2001 bill concerning residential placement for children with serious mental illness with respect to relinquishment of parental rights and stated that she would talk with Ms. Berk about this.

Rep. Summers raised the possibility of the formation of an organization, by parents of children with autism spectrum disorders, to serve the needs that parents perceive are not currently being served.

⁶See Exhibit 5.

⁷The information contained in the binder provided by Ms. Keller is available in the Legislative Information Center as Attachment A.

Mr. Grulke recalled his discussion, at the October 10, 2001, meeting, of a bill regarding teacher training for autism. Staff reported that the legislation was believed to be HCR 10-1991, a resolution encouraging state educational institutions to include in social services curricula courses on autism.

With no further business to discuss, Sen. Adams adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:50 A.M.